

# Alexandria Shaughnessy finds success in figure skating

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Shaughnessy's earliest successes occurred in her singles events.

She won bronze in her division at the New England Regional Championships this past October, advancing to Eastern Sectionals. She has been a solo act at numerous charity events throughout New England, and has competed internationally in Switzerland and France.

But Shaughnessy's foray into singles skating, while successful, has been arguably overshadowed by another type of ice skating - the pairs events. In 2009, Shaughnessy joined forces with Jimmy Morgan of Windham, N.H., and the duo began intensive training for the entirely new discipline.

"I always wanted to try pairs," Shaughnessy said, noting that pairs skating differs sharply from singles events. "The biggest thing about pairs is communication. A lot of skaters have trouble with that, but Jimmy's like my best friend. We're so different from a lot of other pair teams in that way."

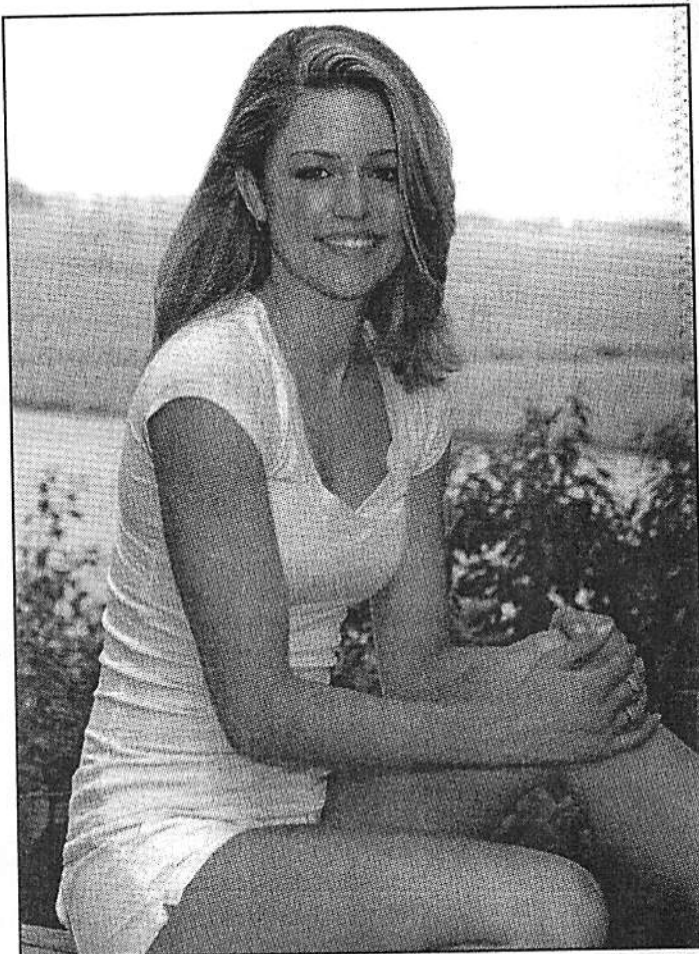
Morgan, a freshman at Boston University, competed with Shaughnessy in Eastern Sectionals this past November, and the pair finished in second place. That silver earned them a spot at Nationals this month. So while most high school seniors relaxed over winter break, Shaughnessy and Morgan stepped up their training.

"We have our whole year program on a poster board at the rink," Shaughnessy said of her training regimen. "We lift weights, do cardio, and work with a dance choreographer to fine-tune our facial expressions. By the time Nationals comes around, we'll be pretty much conditioned to do a long program and a half."

And school?

"I actually had to kind of give up high school for (skating)," Shaughnessy admitted. "I've been taking online college courses and virtual high school classes, but it's definitely a lot harder doing things online, not being in a class with your peers."

"It basically got to the point



PHOTO/DENI JOHNSON

**Duxbury's Alexandria Shaughnessy is one of the area's top figure skaters.**

where Alex would have had to either be home-schooled or give up skating," explained Shaughnessy's mother, Ann. "Alex was just missing so much school for skating. Thankfully, we found online college classes, and Duxbury worked with us, allowing her to be dual-enrolled."

Shaughnessy takes Advanced Placement Art in the mornings at Duxbury High school, trains in Boston from noon to 6 p.m. weekdays, and completes her online classes at night. She leaves Sundays for coaching younger skaters and Saturdays as her one day off. But despite her sacrifices, Shaughnessy still has time to be a mostly normal, if unusually self-driven, teenager. She does community service, wins awards for her artwork, and loves every minute of high school.

"I still get to go to prom," Shaughnessy said with a smile. "I still get to see my friends. I'll still

graduate with them, and I can still go to football games and everything."

When asked about the future, Shaughnessy has few plans set in stone. She's applying to schools in Boston so she can continue training with the Skating Club and take some of her classes online. Shaughnessy mentioned a major in psychology and the hope of coaching in the future.

"I'm really seeing how far I can go with the skating right now," she said.

Gliding and twirling, Shaughnessy's smile makes that statement as clear as the ice she calls home.

The US Figure Skating National Championships take place Jan. 22-30, in Greensboro, N.C. Shaughnessy and Morgan will appear as background skaters in the U.S. Figure Skating film *Rise*, set to premiere Feb. 17.

Duxbury Reporter Jan 7 2011

# Ice queen

## Alexandria Shaughnessy finds success in figure skating

By Molly Lunn  
CORRESPONDENT

DUXBURY — Arms outstretched and smile sparkling, Alexandria Shaughnessy glides quickly across the ice. The Duxbury native jumps and spins on white skates, sapphire dress flowing and dark hair shining beneath the harsh rink lights. Off the ice, this high school senior and National Honor Society member speaks modestly of her skating accomplishments. But as Shaughnessy trains for the US Figure Skating National Championships this January, her skating tells another story.

Shaughnessy began skating lessons when most children begin preschool — at the age of 4. Initially, her only goal was to skate with friends on the Duxbury cranberry bogs. But Shaughnessy's talent soon sur-

passed expectations, and others took notice.

"Two coaches approached my mom," Shaughnessy recalled. "They said 'We'd really like to work with your daughter.' I was about 6 years old."

Despite competing in both dance and gymnastics for a time, the permanent switch to skating was easy for Shaughnessy.

"I love (skating) because it's kind of a mix of everything," she said. "It was one of those things where I could just do it myself rather than having to rely on a team."

A member of the Skating Club of Boston, Shaughnessy does skate with her team in exhibitions on occasion, and she is currently co-captain of Duxbury High's skating team, of which she is a founding member. But

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Duxbury's Alexandria Shaughnessy performs a routine with her skating partner Jimmy Morgan.

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